

The Darkening Age The Christian Destruction Of The Classical World

The Restoration of Rome Against the Night The Germanization of Early Medieval Christianity The Dawn of Christianity The Final Pagan Generation The Darkening Age Ancient Worlds Wealth and Poverty in Early Christianity Pagans and Christians in Late Antique Rome There Is No Crime for Those Who Have Christ The Darkening Age A.D. 381 The Good News Club The Darkening Age Armageddon and Paranoia The Triumph of Christianity The Dark Side of Christian History Between Pagan and Christian The Great Athanasius The House of Islam The Homemade Atheist Pagans The Dark Box The Myth of Persecution The Souls of China Coming Out Christian in the Roman World Faith Is for Weak People How Jesus Became Christian Koh-i-Noor Ten Caesars Battling the Gods The Closing of the Western Mind Future Home of the Living God The Last Pagans of Rome Religious Dissent in Late Antiquity, 350-450 The Last Pagan Emperor Through the Eye of a Needle Christianity, Book-Burning and Censorship in Late Antiquity When God Was A Woman The Barbarian Conversion

The Restoration of Rome

The “marvelous” (Reza Aslan, bestselling author of *Zealot*), New York Times bestselling story of how Christianity became the dominant religion in the West. How did a religion whose first believers were twenty or so illiterate day laborers in a remote part of the empire become the official religion of Rome, converting some thirty million people in just four centuries? In *The Triumph of Christianity*, early Christian historian Bart D. Ehrman weaves the rigorously-researched answer to this question “into a vivid, nuanced, and enormously readable narrative” (Elaine Pagels, National Book Award-winning author of *The Gnostic Gospels*), showing how a handful of charismatic characters used a brilliant social strategy and an irresistible message to win over hearts and minds one at a time. This “humane, thoughtful and intelligent” book (*The New York Times Book Review*) upends the way we think about the single most important cultural transformation our world has ever seen—one that revolutionized art, music, literature, philosophy, ethics, economics, and law.

Against the Night

Every day that we interact with the world, we are in a battle. At stake is the eternal destiny of the souls of our friends, family members, and coworkers. It is a battle we wage not only in prayer but also in words. When we are faced with objections to the faith we profess, are we ready to respond? Apologist and evangelist Ray Comfort has spent his entire career answering objections to the faith, and he wants you to be equipped to do the same. In this practical book, he shows you how to answer 20 objections to Christianity, including questions such as - What physical proof is there that God even exists? - Why does a "loving" God threaten eternal torture for not believing in him? - If there's an all-powerful God, why is the world so out of control? Don't go into battle unarmed. Let Ray Comfort train you to be ready with an answer, not so you can be right, but so you can help bring people from darkness into light.

The Germanization of Early Medieval Christianity

By denying evil we do harm. By denying darkness we obscure the light. Over a period of almost two millennia, the Christian Church has oppressed and brutalized millions of individuals in an attempt to control and contain spirituality. The Dark Side of Christian History reveals in painstaking detail the tragedies, sorrows and injustices inflicted upon humanity by the Church. This expose is a compelling and passionate cry for human dignity and spiritual freedom. Book jacket.

The Dawn of Christianity

In 476 AD, the last of Rome's emperors, known as "Augustulus," was deposed by a barbarian general, the son of one of Attila the Hun's henchmen. With the imperial vestments dispatched to Constantinople, the curtain fell on the Roman empire in Western Europe, its territories divided among successor kingdoms constructed around barbarian military manpower. But, if the Roman Empire was dead, Romans across much of the old empire still lived, holding on to their lands, their values, and their institutions. The conquering barbarians, responding to Rome's continuing psychological dominance and the practical value of many of its institutions, were ready to reignite the imperial flame and enjoy the benefits. As Peter Heather shows in dazzling biographical portraits, each of the three greatest immediate contenders for imperial power--Theoderic, Justinian, and Charlemagne--operated with a different power base but was astonishingly successful in his own way. Though each in turn managed to put back together enough of the old Roman West to stake a plausible claim to the Western imperial title, none of their empires long outlived their founders' deaths. Not until the reinvention of the papacy in the eleventh century would Europe's barbarians find the means to establish a new kind of Roman Empire, one that has lasted a thousand years. A sequel to the bestselling Fall of the Roman Empire, The Restoration of Rome offers a captivating narrative of the death of an era and the birth of the Catholic Church.

The Final Pagan Generation

A sweeping intellectual history of the role of wealth in the church in the last days of the Roman Empire Jesus taught his followers that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter heaven. Yet by the fall of Rome, the church was becoming rich beyond measure. Through the Eye of a Needle is a sweeping intellectual and social history of the vexing problem of wealth in Christianity in the waning days of the Roman Empire, written by the world's foremost scholar of late antiquity. Peter Brown examines the rise of the church through the lens of money and the challenges it posed to an institution that espoused the virtue of poverty and called avarice the root of all evil. Drawing on the writings of major Christian thinkers such as Augustine, Ambrose, and Jerome, Brown examines the controversies and changing attitudes toward money caused by the influx of new wealth into church coffers, and describes the spectacular acts of divestment by rich donors and their growing influence in an empire beset with crisis. He shows how the use of wealth for the care of the poor competed with older forms of philanthropy deeply rooted in the Roman world, and sheds light on the ordinary people who gave away their money in hopes of treasure in heaven. Through the Eye of a Needle challenges the widely held notion that Christianity's growing wealth

sapped Rome of its ability to resist the barbarian invasions, and offers a fresh perspective on the social history of the church in late antiquity.

The Darkening Age

Who and what was pagan depended on the outlook of the observer, as Christopher Jones shows in this fresh and penetrating analysis. Treating paganism as a historical construct rather than a fixed entity, *Between Christian and Pagan* uncovers the fluid ideas, rituals, and beliefs that Christians and pagans shared in Late Antiquity.

Ancient Worlds

A provocative and contrarian religious history that charts the rise of Christianity from the point of view of traditional" religion from the religious scholar and critically acclaimed author of *Augustine*. *Pagans* explores the rise of Christianity from a surprising and unique viewpoint: that of the people who witnessed their ways of life destroyed by what seemed then a powerful religious cult. These "pagans" were actually pious Greeks, Romans, Syrians, and Gauls who observed the traditions of their ancestors. To these devout polytheists, Christians who worshipped only one deity were immoral atheists who believed that a splash of water on the deathbed could erase a lifetime of sin. Religious scholar James J. O'Donnell takes us on a lively tour of the Ancient Roman world through the fourth century CE, when Romans of every nationality, social class, and religious preference found their world suddenly constrained by rulers who preferred a strange new god. Some joined this new cult, while others denied its power, erroneously believing it was little more than a passing fad. In *Pagans*, O'Donnell brings to life various pagan rites and essential features of Roman religion and life, offers fresh portraits of iconic historical figures, including Constantine, Julian, and Augustine, and explores important themes—Rome versus the east, civilization versus barbarism, plurality versus unity, rich versus poor, and tradition versus innovation—in this startling account.

Wealth and Poverty in Early Christianity

'A searingly passionate book' - Bettany Hughes In *The Darkening Age*, Catherine Nixey tells the little-known – and deeply shocking – story of how a militant religion deliberately tried to extinguish the teachings of the Classical world, ushering in unquestioning adherence to the 'one true faith'. The Roman Empire had been generous in embracing and absorbing new creeds. But with the coming of Christianity, everything changed. This new faith, despite preaching peace, was violent, ruthless and intolerant. And once it became the religion of empire, its zealous adherents set about the destruction of the old gods. Their altars were upturned, their temples demolished and their statues hacked to pieces. Books, including great works of philosophy and science, were consigned to the pyre. It was an annihilation. A Book of the Year in the *Daily Telegraph*, the *Spectator*, the *Observer*, and *BBC History Magazine* A New York Times Book Review Editors' Choice Winner of the Royal Society of Literature Jerwood Award for Nonfiction

Pagans and Christians in Late Antique Rome

The supposed collapse of Roman civilization is still lamented more than 1,500 years later-and intertwined with this idea is the notion that a fledgling religion, Christianity, went from a persecuted fringe movement to an irresistible force that toppled the empire. The “intolerant zeal” of Christians, wrote Edward Gibbon, swept Rome's old gods away, and with them the structures that sustained Roman society. Not so, argues Douglas Boin. Such tales are simply untrue to history, and ignore the most important fact of all: life in Rome never came to a dramatic stop. Instead, as Boin shows, a small minority movement rose to transform society-politically, religiously, and culturally-but it was a gradual process, one that happened in fits and starts over centuries. Drawing upon a decade of recent studies in history and archaeology, and on his own research, Boin opens up a wholly new window onto a period we thought we knew. His work is the first to describe how Christians navigated the complex world of social identity in terms of “passing” and “coming out.” Many Christians lived in a dynamic middle ground. Their quiet success, as much as the clamor of martyrdom, was a powerful agent for change. With this insightful approach to the story of Christians in the Roman world, Douglas Boin rewrites, and rediscovers, the fascinating early history of a world faith.

There Is No Crime for Those Who Have Christ

Flavius Claudius Julianus was the last pagan to sit on the Roman imperial throne (361-363). Born in Constantinople in 331 or 332, Julian was raised as a Christian, but apostatized, and during his short reign tried to revive paganism, which, after the conversion to Christianity of his uncle Constantine the Great early in the fourth century, began losing ground at an accelerating pace. Having become an orphan when he was still very young, Julian was taken care of by his cousin Constantius II, one of Constantine's sons, who permitted him to study rhetoric and philosophy and even made him co-emperor in 355. But the relations between Julian and Constantius were strained from the beginning, and it was only Constantius' sudden death in 361 which prevented an impending civil war. As sole emperor, Julian restored the worship of the traditional gods. He opened pagan temples again, reintroduced animal sacrifices, and propagated paganism through both the spoken and the written word. In his treatise *Against the Galilaeans* he sharply criticised the religion of the followers of Jesus whom he disparagingly called 'Galilaeans'. He put his words into action, and issued laws which were displeasing to Christians--the most notorious being his *School Edict*. This provoked the anger of the Christians, who reacted fiercely, and accused Julian of being a persecutor like his predecessors Nero, Decius, and Diocletian. Violent conflicts between pagans and Christians made themselves felt all over the empire. It is disputed whether or not Julian himself was behind such outbursts. Accusations against the Apostate continued to be uttered even after the emperor's early death. In this book, the feasibility of such charges is examined.

The Darkening Age

In 2009, the Good News Club came to the public elementary school where journalist Katherine Stewart sent her children. The Club bills itself as an after-school Bible study, but Stewart soon discovered that its real mission is to convert children to fundamentalist Christianity.

Astonished to discover that the Supreme Court had deemed this religious activity legal in public schools, Stewart began an investigative journey to dozens of cities across the nation to document the impact. As Stewart makes chillingly clear, the rapidly expanding network of Good News Clubs represents just one of a range of initiatives intended to insert religious values into public schools. Although they often appear to be spontaneous, local events, they are in fact organized and funded at a national level. Taken together, they represent a new strategy of the Religious Right in its long-running aim to "take back America," undermining our public education system and secular democracy itself.

A.D. 381

A New York Times Notable Book of 2018 "Searingly passionate...Nixey writes up a storm. Each sentence is rich, textured, evocative, felt...[A] ballista-bolt of a book." —New York Times Book Review In Harran, the locals refused to convert. They were dismembered, their limbs hung along the town's main street. In Alexandria, zealots pulled the elderly philosopher-mathematician Hypatia from her chariot and flayed her to death with shards of broken pottery. Not long before, their fellow Christians had invaded the city's greatest temple and razed it—smashing its world-famous statues and destroying all that was left of Alexandria's Great Library. Today, we refer to Christianity's conquest of the West as a "triumph." But this victory entailed an orgy of destruction in which Jesus's followers attacked and suppressed classical culture, helping to pitch Western civilization into a thousand-year-long decline. Just one percent of Latin literature would survive the purge; countless antiquities, artworks, and ancient traditions were lost forever. As Catherine Nixey reveals, evidence of early Christians' campaign of terror has been hiding in plain sight: in the palimpsests and shattered statues proudly displayed in churches and museums the world over. In *The Darkening Age*, Nixey resurrects this lost history, offering a wrenching account of the rise of Christianity and its terrible cost.

The Good News Club

The Darkening Age is the largely unknown story of how a militant religion comprehensively and deliberately extinguished the teachings of the Classical world, ushering in centuries of unquestioning adherence to 'one true faith'. Despite the long-held notion that the early Christians were meek and mild, going to their martyr's deaths singing hymns of love and praise, the truth, as Catherine Nixey reveals, is very different. Far from being meek and mild, they were violent, ruthless and fundamentally intolerant. Unlike the polytheistic world, in which the addition of one new religion made no fundamental difference to the old ones, this new ideology stated not only that it was the way, the truth and the light but that, by extension, every single other way was wrong and had to be destroyed. From the 1st century to the 6th, those who didn't fall into step with its beliefs were pursued in every possible way: social, legal, financial and physical. Their altars were upturned and their temples demolished, their statues hacked to pieces and their priests killed. It was an annihilation. Authoritative, vividly written and utterly compelling, this is a remarkable debut from a brilliant young historian.

The Darkening Age

A bestselling journalist exposes the connection between the Catholic Church's sexual abuse crisis and the practice of confession.

Armageddon and Paranoia

"As panoramic as it is learned, this is ancient history for our globalized world." Tom Holland, author of *Dynasty* and *Rubicon* Twenty-five-hundred years ago, civilizations around the world entered a revolutionary new era that overturned old order and laid the foundation for our world today. In the face of massive social changes across three continents, radical new forms of government emerged; mighty wars were fought over trade, religion, and ideology; and new faiths were ruthlessly employed to unify vast empires. The histories of Rome and China, Greece and India-the stories of Constantine and Confucius, Qin Shi Huangdi and Hannibal-are here revealed to be interconnected incidents in the midst of a greater drama. In *Ancient Worlds*, historian Michael Scott presents a gripping narrative of this unique age in human civilization, showing how diverse societies responded to similar pressures and how they influenced one another: through conquest and conversion, through trade in people, goods, and ideas. An ambitious reinvention of our grandest histories, *Ancient Worlds* reveals new truths about our common human heritage. "A bold and imaginative page-turner that challenges ideas about the world of antiquity." Peter Frankopan, author of *The Silk Roads*

The Triumph of Christianity

"An intelligent synthesis of observations from a wide range of anthropological, historical, and other literature.[Russell's] ultimate mapping of the Germanizing shifts in early medieval Christian belief and praxis is done with a subtle eye to this particularization, its consequences, and the attempted undoing of it since the Second Vatican Council."--Catholic Historical Review

The Dark Side of Christian History

In A.D. 381, Theodosius, emperor of the eastern Roman empire, issued a decree in which all his subjects were required to subscribe to a belief in the Trinity of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This edict defined Christian orthodoxy and brought to an end a lively and wide-ranging debate about the nature of God; all other interpretations were now declared heretical. It was the first time in a thousand years of Greco-Roman civilization free thought was unambiguously suppressed. Why has Theodosius's revolution been airbrushed from the historical record? In this groundbreaking book, acclaimed historian Charles Freeman argues that Theodosius's edict and the subsequent suppression of paganism not only brought an end to the diversity of religious and philosophical beliefs throughout the empire, but created numerous theological problems for the Church, which have remained unsolved. The year A.D. 381, as Freeman puts it, was "a turning point which time forgot."

Between Pagan and Christian

In *The Myth of Persecution*, Candida Moss, a leading expert on early Christianity, reveals how the early church exaggerated, invented, and forged stories of Christian martyrs and how the dangerous legacy of a martyrdom complex is employed today to silence dissent and galvanize a new generation of culture warriors. According to cherished church tradition and popular belief, before the Emperor Constantine made Christianity legal in the fourth century, early Christians were systematically persecuted by a brutal Roman Empire intent on their destruction. As the story goes, vast numbers of believers were thrown to the lions, tortured, or burned alive because they refused to renounce Christ. These saints, Christianity's inspirational heroes, are still venerated today. Moss, however, exposes that the "Age of Martyrs" is a fiction—there was no sustained 300-year-long effort by the Romans to persecute Christians. Instead, these stories were pious exaggerations; highly stylized rewritings of Jewish, Greek, and Roman noble death traditions; and even forgeries designed to marginalize heretics, inspire the faithful, and fund churches. The traditional story of persecution is still taught in Sunday school classes, celebrated in sermons, and employed by church leaders, politicians, and media pundits who insist that Christians were—and always will be—persecuted by a hostile, secular world. While violence against Christians does occur in select parts of the world today, the rhetoric of persecution is both misleading and rooted in an inaccurate history of the early church. Moss urges modern Christians to abandon the conspiratorial assumption that the world is out to get Christians and, rather, embrace the consolation, moral instruction, and spiritual guidance that these martyrdom stories provide.

The Great Athanasius

Betty Brogaard was raised to be a good Christian. By the time she was 20 years old, she had joined a fundamentalist church. She even met and married a young man who became a minister in the congregation. However, the more she came to understand Christianity from within, the more she found herself asking questions instead of finding answers. In *The Homemade Atheists*, Betty shares her sincere, personal and fascinating journey from the mental slavery of religion to the happiness she found in freethought. Along the way and without malice, she offers questions that challenge you to analyze your own beliefs--exactly as she did over a period of many years. Her transformation provides a wealth of insights for anyone seeking a path to a nonreligious way of life.

The House of Islam

Bestselling classical historian Barry Strauss delivers “an exceptionally accessible history of the Roman Empire...much of *Ten Caesars* reads like a script for *Game of Thrones*” (*The Wall Street Journal*)—a summation of three and a half centuries of the Roman Empire as seen through the lives of ten of the most important emperors, from Augustus to Constantine. In this essential and “enlightening” (*The New York Times Book Review*) work, Barry Strauss tells the story of the Roman Empire from rise to reinvention, from Augustus, who founded the empire, to Constantine, who made it Christian and moved the capital east to Constantinople. During these centuries Rome gained in splendor and territory, then lost both. By the fourth century, the time of Constantine, the Roman Empire had changed so dramatically in geography, ethnicity, religion, and culture that it would have been virtually unrecognizable to Augustus. Rome’s legacy remains today in so many ways,

from language, law, and architecture to the seat of the Roman Catholic Church. Strauss examines this enduring heritage through the lives of the men who shaped it: Augustus, Tiberius, Nero, Vespasian, Trajan, Hadrian, Marcus Aurelius, Septimius Severus, Diocletian, and Constantine. Over the ages, they learned to maintain the family business—the government of an empire—by adapting when necessary and always persevering no matter the cost. *Ten Caesars* is a “captivating narrative that breathes new life into a host of transformative figures” (Publishers Weekly). This “superb summation of four centuries of Roman history, a masterpiece of compression, confirms Barry Strauss as the foremost academic classicist writing for the general reader today” (The Wall Street Journal).

The Homemade Atheist

In *How Jesus Became Christian*, Barrie Wilson asks "How did a young rabbi become the god of a religion he wouldn't recognize, one which was established through the use of calculated anti-Semitism?" Colourfully recreating the world of Jesus Christ, Wilson brings the answer to life by looking at the rivalry between the "Jesus movement," informed by the teachings of Matthew and adhering to Torah worship, and the "Christ movement," headed by Paul, which shunned Torah. Wilson suggests that Paul's movement was not rooted in the teachings and sayings of the historical Jesus, but solely in Paul's mystical vision of Christ, a man Paul actually never met. He then shows how Paul established the new religion through anti-Semitic propaganda, which ultimately crushed the Jesus Movement. Sure to be controversial, this is an exciting, well-written popular religious history that cuts to the heart of the differences between Christianity and Judaism, to the origins of one of the world's great religions and, ultimately, to the question of who Jesus Christ really was – a Jew or a Christian. From the Hardcover edition.

Pagans

The Great Athanasius is an introductory survey of the life and work of the most dynamic pastor-theologian of the fourth century. From his birth and early years in Alexandria to the "Golden Decade," the book charts the life and work of Athanasius through a close study of his main writings and other important works. Central to his story is the "Arian controversy," the Council of Nicea, and the subsequent difficulties that emerged in building a consensus around the "very God, very Man" affirmation of the Nicene Creed. The eventual triumph of the theology of the Nicene Creed was largely due to his tireless efforts, which are carefully chronicled in this work. Though a controversial figure in his own lifetime, through both his theological insight and ecclesiastical leadership, and in his fidelity to his faith convictions, Athanasius proved to be "the great" church father and theologian of his age and one of the seminal Christian thinkers of all time.

The Dark Box

This book sheds new light on the religious and consequently social changes taking place in late antique Rome. The essays in this volume argue that the once-dominant notion of pagan-Christian religious conflict cannot fully explain the texts and artifacts, as well as the social,

religious, and political realities of late antique Rome. Together, the essays demonstrate that the fourth-century city was a more fluid, vibrant, and complex place than was previously thought. Competition between diverse groups in Roman society - be it pagans with Christians, Christians with Christians, or pagans with pagans - did create tensions and hostility, but it also allowed for coexistence and reduced the likelihood of overt violent, physical conflict. Competition and coexistence, along with conflict, emerge as still central paradigms for those who seek to understand the transformations of Rome from the age of Constantine through the early fifth century.

The Myth of Persecution

“Ed Husain has become one of the most vital Muslim voices in the world. The House of Islam could very well be his magnum opus.” -Reza Aslan, #1 New York Times bestselling author of *Zealot* “This should be compulsory reading.” -Peter Frankopan, author of the international bestseller *The Silk Roads Today*, Islam is to many in the West an alien force, with Muslims held in suspicion. Failure to grasp the inner workings of religion and geopolitics has haunted American foreign policy for decades and has been decisive in the new administration's controversial orders. The intricacies and shadings must be understood by the West not only to build a stronger, more harmonious relationship between the two cultures, but also for greater accuracy in predictions as to how current crises, such as the growth of ISIS, will develop and from where the next might emerge. The House of Islam addresses key questions and points of disconnection. What are the roots of the conflict between Sunni and Shi'a Muslims that is engulfing Pakistan and the Middle East? Does the Koran encourage the killing of infidels? The book thoughtfully explores the events and issues that have come from and contributed to the broadening gulf between Islam and the West, from the United States' overthrow of Iran's first democratically elected leader to the emergence of ISIS, from the declaration of a fatwa on Salman Rushdie to the attack on the offices of Charlie Hebdo. Authoritative and engaging, Ed Husain leads us clearly and carefully through the nuances of Islam and its people, taking us back to basics to contend that the Muslim world need not be a stranger to the West, nor our enemy, but our peaceable allies.

The Souls of China

Wealth and Poverty in Early Christianity is part of *Ad Fontes: Early Christian Sources*, a series designed to present ancient Christian texts essential to an understanding of Christian theology, ecclesiology, and practice. This volume is designed to introduce the reader to the broad range of texts that reflect early Christian thoughts and practices on the topic of wealth and poverty. Developed in light of recent Patristic scholarship, the volumes will provide a representative sampling of theological contributions from both East and West. The series aims to provide volumes that are relevant for a variety of courses: from introduction to theology to classes on doctrine and the development of Christian thought. The goal of each volume is not to be exhaustive, but rather representative enough to denote for a non-specialist audience the multivalent character of early Christian thought, allowing readers to see how and why early Christian doctrine and practice developed the way it did.

Coming Out Christian in the Roman World

Here, archaeologically documented, is the story of the religion of the Goddess. Under her, women's roles were far more prominent than in patriarchal Judeo-Christian cultures. Stone describes this ancient system and, with its disintegration, the decline in women's status.

Faith Is for Weak People

"An investigation of the process by which large parts of Europe accepted the Christian faith between the fourth and the fourteenth centuries and of some of the cultural consequences that flowed therefrom." In a work of splendid scholarship that reflects both a firm mastery of difficult sources and a keen intuition, one of Britain's foremost medievalists tells the story of the Christianization of Europe. It is a very large story, for conversion encompassed much more than religious belief. With it came enormous cultural change: Latin literacy and books, Roman notions of law and property, and the concept of town life, as well as new tastes in food, drink, and dress. Whether from faith or by force, from self-interest or by revelation, conversion had an immense impact that is with us even today.

How Jesus Became Christian

Focusing on the 4th and 5th centuries, Michael Gaddis explores how various groups employed the language of religious violence to construct their own identities, to undermine the legitimacy of their rivals, & to advance themselves in the competitive & high stakes process of Christianizing the Roman Empire.

Koh-i-Noor

--Book Jacket.

Ten Caesars

Religious Dissent in Late Antiquity reconsiders the religious history of the late Roman Empire, focusing on the shifting position of dissenting religious groups - conventionally called 'pagans' and 'heretics'. The period from the mid-fourth century until the mid-fifth century CE witnessed a significant transformation of late Roman society and a gradual shift from the world of polytheistic religions into the Christian Empire. This book challenges the many straightforward melodramatic narratives of the Christianisation of the Roman Empire, still prevalent both in academic research and in popular non-fiction works. Religious Dissent in Late Antiquity demonstrates that the narrative is much more nuanced than the simple Christian triumph over the classical world. It looks at everyday life, economic aspects, day-to-day practices, and conflicts of interest in the relations of religious groups. Religious Dissent in Late Antiquity addresses two aspects: rhetoric and realities, and

consequently, delves into the interplay between the manifest ideologies and daily life found in late antique sources. It is a detailed analysis of selected themes and a close reading of selected texts, tracing key elements and developments in the treatment of dissident religious groups. The book focuses on specific themes, such as the limits of imperial legislation and ecclesiastical control, the end of sacrifices, and the label of magic. *Religious Dissent in Late Antiquity* examines the ways in which dissident religious groups were construed as religious outsiders, but also explores local rituals and beliefs in late Roman society as creative applications and expressions of the infinite range of human inventiveness.

Battling the Gods

A compelling history of radical transformation in the fourth-century--when Christianity decimated the practices of traditional pagan religion in the Roman Empire. *The Final Pagan Generation* recounts the fascinating story of the lives and fortunes of the last Romans born before the Emperor Constantine converted to Christianity. Edward J. Watts traces their experiences of living through the fourth century's dramatic religious and political changes, when heated confrontations saw the Christian establishment legislate against pagan practices as mobs attacked pagan holy sites and temples. The emperors who issued these laws, the imperial officials charged with implementing them, and the Christian perpetrators of religious violence were almost exclusively young men whose attitudes and actions contrasted markedly with those of the earlier generation, who shared neither their juniors' interest in creating sharply defined religious identities nor their propensity for violent conflict. Watts examines why the "final pagan generation"--born to the old ways and the old world in which it seemed to everyone that religious practices would continue as they had for the past two thousand years--proved both unable to anticipate the changes that imperially sponsored Christianity produced and unwilling to resist them. A compelling and provocative read, suitable for the general reader as well as students and scholars of the ancient world.

The Closing of the Western Mind

It is estimated that only a small fraction, less than 1 per cent, of ancient literature has survived to the present day. The role of Christian authorities in the active suppression and destruction of books in Late Antiquity has received surprisingly little sustained consideration by academics. In an approach that presents evidence for the role played by Christian institutions, writers and saints, this book analyses a broad range of literary and legal sources, some of which have hitherto been little studied. Paying special attention to the problem of which genres and book types were likely to be targeted, the author argues that in addition to heretical, magical, astrological and anti-Christian books, other less obviously subversive categories of literature were also vulnerable to destruction, censorship or suppression through prohibition of the copying of manuscripts. These include texts from materialistic philosophical traditions, texts which were to become the basis for modern philosophy and science. This book examines how Christian authorities, theologians and ideologues suppressed ancient texts and associated ideas at a time of fundamental transformation in the late classical world.

Future Home of the Living God

From the internationally acclaimed and bestselling historians William Dalrymple and Anita Anand, the first comprehensive and authoritative history of the Koh-i-Noor diamond, arguably the most celebrated jewel in the world. On March 29, 1849, the ten-year-old leader of the Sikh kingdom of the Punjab was ushered into the magnificent Mirrored Hall at the center of the British fort in Lahore, India. There, in a formal Act of Submission, the frightened but dignified child handed over to the British East India Company swathes of the richest land in India and the single most valuable object in the subcontinent: the celebrated Koh-i-Noor diamond, otherwise known as the Mountain of Light. To celebrate the acquisition, the British East India Company commissioned a history of the diamond woven together from the gossip of the Delhi Bazaars. From that moment forward, the Koh-i-Noor became the most famous and mythological diamond in history, with thousands of people coming to see it at the 1851 Great Exhibition and still more thousands repeating the largely fictitious account of its passage through history. Using original eyewitness accounts and chronicles never before translated into English, Dalrymple and Anand trace the true history of the diamond and disperse the myths and fantastic tales that have long surrounded this awe-inspiring jewel. The resulting history of south and central Asia tells a true tale of greed, conquest, murder, torture, colonialism, and appropriation that shaped a continent and the Koh-i-Noor itself.

The Last Pagans of Rome

"How new is atheism? Although adherents and opponents alike today present it as an invention of the European Enlightenment, when the forces of science and secularism broadly challenged those of faith, disbelief in the gods, in fact, originated in a far more remote past. In *Battling the Gods*, Tim Whitmarsh journeys into the ancient Mediterranean, a world almost unimaginably different from our own, to recover the stories and voices of those who first refused the divinities. Homer's epic poems of human striving, journeying, and passion were ancient Greece's only "sacred texts," but no ancient Greek thought twice about questioning or mocking his stories of the gods. Priests were functionaries rather than sources of moral or cosmological wisdom. The absence of centralized religious authority made for an extraordinary variety of perspectives on sacred matters, from the devotional to the atheos, or "godless." Whitmarsh explores this kaleidoscopic range of ideas about the gods, focusing on the colorful individuals who challenged their existence. Among these were some of the greatest ancient poets and philosophers and writers, as well as the less well known: Diagoras of Melos, perhaps the first self-professed atheist; Democritus, the first materialist; Socrates, executed for rejecting the gods of the Athenian state; Epicurus and his followers, who thought gods could not intervene in human affairs; the brilliantly mischievous satirist Lucian of Samosata. Before the revolutions of late antiquity, which saw the scriptural religions of Christianity and Islam enforced by imperial might, there were few constraints on belief. Everything changed, however, in the millennium between the appearance of the Homeric poems and Christianity's establishment as Rome's state religion in the fourth century AD. As successive Greco-Roman empires grew in size and complexity, and power was increasingly concentrated in central capitals, states sought to impose collective religious adherence, first to cults devoted to individual rulers, and ultimately to monotheism. In this new world, there was no room for outright disbelief: the label "atheist" was used now to demonize anyone who merely disagreed with the orthodoxy--and so it would remain for centuries."--Jacket.

Religious Dissent in Late Antiquity, 350-450

A New York Times Notable Book of 2017 Louise Erdrich, the New York Times bestselling, National Book Award-winning author of *LaRose* and *The Round House*, paints a startling portrait of a young woman fighting for her life and her unborn child against oppressive forces that manifest in the wake of a cataclysmic event. The world as we know it is ending. Evolution has reversed itself, affecting every living creature on earth. Science cannot stop the world from running backwards, as woman after woman gives birth to infants that appear to be primitive species of humans. Twenty-six-year-old Cedar Hawk Songmaker, adopted daughter of a pair of big-hearted, open-minded Minneapolis liberals, is as disturbed and uncertain as the rest of America around her. But for Cedar, this change is profound and deeply personal. She is four months pregnant. Though she wants to tell the adoptive parents who raised her from infancy, Cedar first feels compelled to find her birth mother, Mary Potts, an Ojibwe living on the reservation, to understand both her and her baby's origins. As Cedar goes back to her own biological beginnings, society around her begins to disintegrate, fueled by a swelling panic about the end of humanity. There are rumors of martial law, of Congress confining pregnant women. Of a registry, and rewards for those who turn these wanted women in. Flickering through the chaos are signs of increasing repression: a shaken Cedar witnesses a family wrenched apart when police violently drag a mother from her husband and child in a parking lot. The streets of her neighborhood have been renamed with Bible verses. A stranger answers the phone when she calls her adoptive parents, who have vanished without a trace. It will take all Cedar has to avoid the prying eyes of potential informants and keep her baby safe. A chilling dystopian novel both provocative and prescient, *Future Home of the Living God* is a startlingly original work from one of our most acclaimed writers: a moving meditation on female agency, self-determination, biology, and natural rights that speaks to the troubling changes of our time.

The Last Pagan Emperor

A radical and powerful reappraisal of the impact of Constantine's adoption of Christianity on the later Roman world, and on the subsequent development both of Christianity and of Western civilization. When the Emperor Constantine converted to Christianity in 368 AD, he changed the course of European history in ways that continue to have repercussions to the present day. Adopting those aspects of the religion that suited his purposes, he turned Rome on a course from the relatively open, tolerant and pluralistic civilization of the Hellenistic world, towards a culture that was based on the rule of fixed authority, whether that of the Bible, or the writings of Ptolemy in astronomy and of Galen and Hippocrates in medicine. Only a thousand years later, with the advent of the Renaissance and the emergence of modern science, did Europe begin to free itself from the effects of Constantine's decision, yet the effects of his establishment of Christianity as a state religion remain with us, in many respects, today. Brilliantly wide-ranging and ambitious, this is a major work of history. From the Trade Paperback edition.

Through the Eye of a Needle

Robert Knapp reveals why some ordinary people in Judea and in the Roman and Greek worlds embraced a new approach to the

supernatural in their daily lives. In a time of prophets, miracles, and magic, Jesus convinced people to change their beliefs by showing his connection to god-like power and solidifying his credentials through the Resurrection.

Christianity, Book-Burning and Censorship in Late Antiquity

Former British Ambassador to the Soviet Union and author of the definitive account of the Soviet invasion and occupation of Afghanistan, Sir Rodric Braithwaite offers here a tour d'horizon of nuclear policy from the end of World War II and start of the Cold War to the present day. *Armageddon and Paranoia* unfolds the full history of nuclear weapons that began with the arms race between the United States and the Soviet Union and now extends worldwide. For decades, an apocalypse seemed imminent, staved off only by the certainty that if one side launched these missiles the other would launch an equally catastrophic counterstrike. This method of avoiding all-out nuclear warfare was called "Deterrence," a policy of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD). Still, though neither side actively wanted to plunge the world into nuclear wasteland, the possibility of war by misjudgment or mistake meant fears could never be entirely assuaged. Both an exploration of Deterrence and the long history of superpower nuclear policy, *Armageddon and Paranoia* comes at a time when tensions surrounding nuclear armament have begun mounting once more. No book until this one has offered so comprehensive a history of the topic that has guided--at times dominated--the world in which we live.

When God Was A Woman

From the Pulitzer Prize winning journalist: a revelatory portrait of religion in China today its history, the spiritual traditions of its Eastern and Western faiths, and the ways in which it is influencing China's future. Following a century of violent antireligious campaigns, China is now awash with new temples, churches, and mosques as well as cults, sects, and politicians trying to harness religion for their own ends. Driving this explosion of faith is uncertainty over what it means to be Chinese, and how to live an ethical life in a country that discarded traditional morality a century ago and is still searching for new guideposts. Ian Johnson lived for extended periods with underground church members, rural Daoists, and Buddhist pilgrims. He has distilled these experiences into a cycle of festivals, births, deaths, detentions, and struggle a great awakening of faith that is shaping the soul of the world's newest superpower. (With black-and-white illustrations throughout).

The Barbarian Conversion

Since this book was written in 1989, the shadows over the world have grown deeper and longer. Many of us may have become blindly accustomed to the persistently deteriorating state of affairs. Charles Colson has dedicated his life to providing a clear diagnosis of our predicament and a rational guide to action for Christians in the Western world.

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